

# ORGANIZE YOUR LIFE!



## IN THIS ISSUE, WE WILL DISCUSS:

9 WAYS TO ENJOY THE HOLIDAY SEASON WITH EASE AND SAVE TIME!

MAKING A LIST

3 ORGANIZING IDEAS I LEARNED FROM MY CLIENTS

HOW TO ORGANIZE THINGS YOU WILL USE, BUT NOT RIGHT NOW



# HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

## 9 WAYS TO ENJOY THE HOLIDAY SEASON WITH EASE AND SAVE TIME!

Most of us like to save our holiday shopping experience to the last minute. Here are some tips and tricks to get through them, without breaking a sweat!



### 1. SHOP ONLINE

A friend of mine hates to shop. Instead, she asks for a wish list from family members. That way she can go online purchase the items. For that personal touch she has the items shipped to her own house and then wraps them herself.

### 2. MAKE A LIST

Before you brave the malls or the Internet, be sure to make a list of people you are buying for, what ideas for gifts you have, and how much you want to spend. After you create this list, determine what stores will have what. You can plan your day around the store locations. If you reside in Seattle, but are meeting your eastside friends for dinner, make a quick jaunt over to Bellevue Square. If you work downtown, you can stop by one of the large malls before you head home. If you organize your list you'll save a lot of time!

### 3. BUY GIFT CERTIFICATES

These are great for people who are hard to shop for. A gift certificate is perfect: they can use it at their own leisure and it doesn't clutter up their home.

### 4. TAKE A FRIEND OUT TO A DINNER

Instead of purchasing a gift and dropping it off at their home, take them out to dinner. This is a great way to spend time with a loved one. Just think: instead of braving the malls, you can sit down to a nice meal and catch up with a friend.

# 9 WAYS TO ENJOY THE HOLIDAY SEASON WITH EASE AND SAVE TIME!

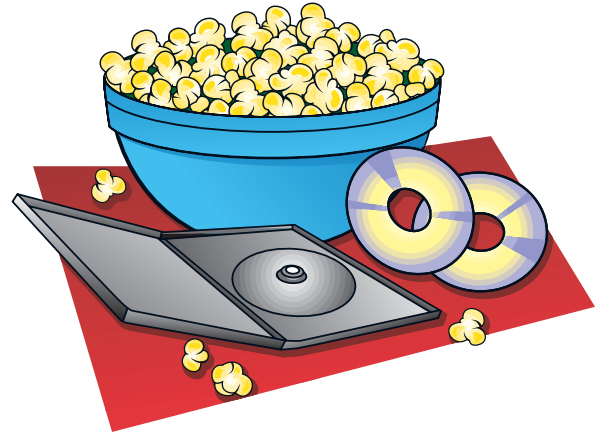
## 5. HOST A HOLIDAY TEA

This is a great way to have all of your closest friends over. Instead of getting gifts for each other, have each guest bring a yummy treat. While having a tea party can be a lot of work, it is a more rewarding way to spend the holiday season than shopping. Some great ways of saving time for the tea party would be to purchase already prepared food. That way all you have to do is put the kettle on and set the table!



## 6. BAKE COOKIES

Have a cookie baking day with your family. This is a wonderful way to spend the day. Before your family members come, ask them to pick one kind of cookie they want to make. Each family member can bring the ingredients for the cookie they want to make. If one of your family members has their hands way too full (such as a new born baby) offer to pick up the ingredients for them. You can combine kids and grown ups in this activity. Another time saver to avoid the malls would be to give the cookies out as gifts!



## 7. RENT MOVIES

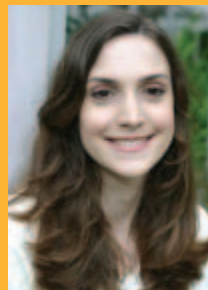
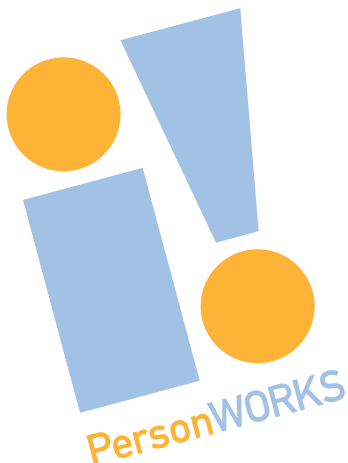
While you are watching the movies, you can send out holiday cards, wrap gifts and drink hot cocoa or eggnog!

## 8. SHOP LATE

Do your grocery shopping for Christmas dinner late at night. That way, you'll avoid the crowds and can take your time. Be sure to have the refrigerator and freezer cleaned out for prepared food and leftovers!

## 9. BUY A NEW BOARD GAME

Purchase a new game for after the holiday dinner feast. After your holiday dinner, set the game up to play. If there are children that are too young to play, have an additional activity for them too.



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## MAKING A LIST

Recently my family had two deaths in the family and of course it got me thinking. As I ventured through my late aunt's house I saw the gifts I had made and purchased for her, as well as all of the items she had collected over the years. We had the difficult task of going through each and every item, deciding who wanted it, and what to do with it if no one didn't. It dawned on me that I would have to do the same thing once my parents die. I know it sounds a bit morbid, but it is a reality we all must think about.

My sister who is a paralegal suggests having the loved one make a list before they die. Be sure the list includes the following:

- the object (be sure to describe it)
- who it is going to

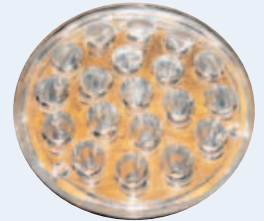
One example is what a client of mine and I did. We took all of her belongs and photographed them. As each photo was taken, we made a list similar to the example above. After we had the photos developed we created an album. On the back of each photo was whom the object was going to. It was very difficult for them to go through these objects, but they were really happy they did it. It saved their children the arduous task of doing it after they were gone.

## 3 ORGANIZING IDEAS I LEARNED FROM MY CLIENTS:

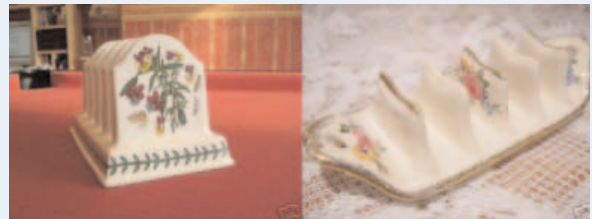
A lot of creative ideas come from my clients who have a hard time getting rid of things. Below are three that I found the most useful of the bunch!

1. Instead of tossing those old hair ties <http://tinyurl.com/b8drq> you used for your little girl's hair use them as a tie for electrical cords.

2. Take those old glass flower frogs that you used for planting and use them as a pen holder.




3. Love old china, but hate that you don't get to use it much? Purchase, or grab out of your hutch a toast sorter. Use it in your office for your daily mail. You are more likely to keep it nice and organized, if you like what it looks like.



## HOW TO ORGANIZE THINGS YOU WILL USE, BUT NOT RIGHT NOW

This probably sounds strange coming from an organizer, but there are things that we can keep that we don't use all of the time. Below is a short list of those very things.

• **Buttons:** Every time you purchase a new coat or other article of clothing that -requires buttons, mark the small Zip-Loc bag of buttons that comes in the pocket with what article of clothing the button belongs to. That way when the button  does pop off, you won't have to run to the store and try to match it. Be sure to keep the buttons in one place, and toss out the ones that went to the donation station!

• **Skis:** be sure to store skis in a dry space. If you don't, they will rust and bend, especially in Seattle! If you do not have extra space in your home, purchase heavy duty ski bags and boot bags (<http://tinyurl.com/95bhb>). That should help keep the dampness out.

• **Cards** – this is a hard one for a lot of people. They like to stock up to avoid shopping for a last minute card. Here are a few ways to organize them:

- Card organizer by occasion: <http://tinyurl.com/72uth>
- Tall recipe box/shoebox with index cards. If there are extra large cards, place them on the

bottom of the bin, or keep the top off! <http://tinyurl.com/7sfdm>

- If you are looking to save money, use Zip-Loc bags – you can easily label them with a permanent marker.
- One file for all of them – be sure to use a box bottom file with sides. This isn't my favorite approach, but if you are lacking space and the time to organize them by subject/person this is the fastest way to go. Keep in mind that you will end up spending time searching for that one card you picked up for you friend. The best

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use of the one file would be for a box of the same cards. Another client of mine organized her cards by occasion into files. This is good exercise to see how many cards you really have. You may be at your limit!

• **Holiday dishes** – if you use different dishes for holiday occasions below are some tips for storing them.

• If you have lack of cupboard space in your kitchen an extra closet or storage room would be ideal. I would keep dishes off limits, as they make crack from the cold, even in Seattle!

• Purchase china savers (<http://tinyurl.com/d7cot>) and Rubbermaid bins to store the dishes, you may want to color code the bins by occasion. For example, red for Valentines Day, green and red for Christmas (<http://tinyurl.com/88yy3> & <http://tinyurl.com/8mkfk>), orange for Halloween and so on. Be sure to label them, regardless of color. You may get confused due to the stress of the holiday!

• Another storage idea is to purchase packing boxes. They come with glass separators and foam pouches for your plates.\*  
<http://tinyurl.com/bfgya>  
<http://tinyurl.com/ckapz>

\*While this may seem like the pricier route to go, keep in mind that you will use them yearly.

• **Christmas & Chanukah decorations** – yes, it is just around the corner! When you take that tree down, you will have a large amount of lights, bulbs and ornaments. There are a ton of great storage bins out there for just that. To name a few, visit the following web sites:  
<http://tinyurl.com/cvyav>  
<http://tinyurl.com/7s8ph>

• **Summer sheets & blankets.** Most of us have flannel sheets and down comforters for those winter months. In the summer we tend to use lighter weight sheets. Why not store the summer sheets away, to make more room in your linen closet, or under the bed storage?

